ELKIN, DAVID

DRAWER 4A PREACHER INFLUENCES

Abraham Lincoln and religion

David Elkin

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the

Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

LINCOLN LORE

No. 69 FORT WAYNE, INDIANA August 4, 1930

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of The Lincoln Historical Research Foundation

Endowed By The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company

Dr. Louis A. Warren - - - Editor

REVEREND DAVID ELKIN

The biographical sketches of Lincoln's school teachers, which have appeared at intervals in recent numbers of Lincoln Lore, have been so well received, that a similar series presenting some of the pioneer preachers who influenced Lincoln is anticipated.

The preacher most often associated with Abraham Lincoln's younger years is Rev. David Elkin. He was the minister of the church to which the parents of Abraham Lincoln belonged in Kentucky and also preached the funeral sermon of Nancy Hanks Lincoln in Spencer County, Indiana.

As early as 1792 the names of Nathaniel and Jesse Elkin are entered in the commissioner's books of Green County, Kentucky. In 1800, the name of David Elkin appears on record as a white male over twenty-one years of age. From then until 1842 it occurs with regularity on the books that are available. It was in Green County, adjacent to La Rue County, where the Kentucky home of the Lincoln's was located, that David Elkin grew up.

He was raised in the Good Hope Church in Green County later becoming pastor of the congregation. He served them until 1811 when he was succeeded by John Chandler.

On the fourth Saturday in April, 1812, the following order appears in the record book of the South Fork Baptist Church. "Brother Jesse Friend appointed to go and see brother Elkin and request him to come and see us." There is evidence in the records that Elkin was preaching at this church in Hardin County during March, 1813. Jesse Friend, the messenger to consult Elkins was the husband of Mary or Polly Hanks said to have been an aunt of Lincoln's mother.

Spencer says that in 1814 Elkin performed wedding services in Hardin County, and also preached the introductory sermon for the Russell Creek Association. This writer also gives us a very good picture of him:

"He was a man of extraordinary natural intellect, but was uncultivated, being barely able to read. He was extremely poor as to this world's goods; and what was worse he was very indolent and slovenly in his dress. Yet it pleased the Lord to use him to good account in the early days of his ministry . . . . His reputation was somewhat sullied in his latter years, perhaps from too free use of strong drink."

The editor of Lincoln Lore at one time interviewed Fields Elkin, a grandson of David Elkin, who said:

"His father had related to him how that when Grandfather Elkin first went to preaching he did not know but one letter in the alphabet, the letter O, and he knew that because it was round. In his old age, however, he could read the Bible through by heart."

There are several instances in the record books of Green County which bear out the statement of the grandson that the old preacher could not write. On numerous occasions he made his mark where his signature should have appeared.

Fields Elkin also gives us the assurance that it was his grandfather who preached Nancy Lincoln's funeral service; together with the few details which he remembers concerning his grandfather's trip to Indiana.

"Grandfather Elkin went to visit his two sons, Hodgen and Warren, who had moved to Indiana. On the way he stopped at Thomas Lincoln's, whom he had known when Thomas lived in Kentucky. While there he preached the funeral service of Nancy Hanks. He then went on and spent some time with his relatives before returning."

Until lately I have been sceptical, more or less, of the tradition which says that Abraham Lincoln as a nine year old boy wrote a letter to David Elkin asking him to come and preach his mother's funeral. After corresponding with some of the descendants of Elkin, I have been led to think that possibly such a letter was written. One aged member of the family claims to have seen the letter:

That the memorial service did not take place for several weeks after the interment of the body, was not uncommon in the pioneer country where a minister could not be secured at the time of the burial. We have no detailed account of the eulogy which Elkin delivered. His close contact with the family for several years in the Kentucky home where he had frequently visited, would allow him to pay a worthy tribute to this pioneer mother. One who was present at the service has described it as follows:

"As the appointed day approached notice was given the entire neighborhood. On a bright sabbath morning the settlers of the neighborhood gathered in. Some came in carts of the rudest construction, their wheels consisting of huge boles of forest trees and the product of axe and auger; some came on horseback, two or three upon a horse, others came in wagons drawn by oxen, and still others came on foot. Taking his stand at the foot of the grave Parson Elkin lifted his voice in prayer and sacred song and then preached a sermon. He spoke of the precious Christian woman who had gone with the warm praise which she had deserved, and held her up as an example of true womanhood."

There is some confusion as to the whereabouts of David Elkin's grave. The residents at Mitchell, Indiana, claim it is located in an abandoned cemetery three miles from the city. A marker bearing the inscription: "David Elkins, 2nd South Carolina Militia, War of 1812," is to be found there.

This Elkins is said to have enlisted for the war of 1812 from Richland District, North Carolina and was discharged March 9, 1815.

The name of David Elkin, the Kentucky preacher, appears in the Kentucky records so many times during the interval between 1812 and 1815 that he cannot be associated with the Indiana personage by the name of Elkins. While the matter of using a final "s" in the spelling of a name is of no vital importance, there does seem to be some consistency in the spelling of Elkin among the Kentucky branch of the family.

As late as 1842 the names of David Elkin, Sr. and David Elkin, Jr. appear on the tax list of Green County, Kentucky. David Jr. was the father of Fields Elkin who is positive that his grandfather, Rev. David Elkin, Sr., died near Mt. Sherman, LaRue County, Kentucky, and is buried near his own father David Elkin, Sr. I have visited the Old Elkin Grave yard but no stones mark the graves of these pioneers.

DAVID ELKINS MONUMENT.

In 1935, the Indiana Conference Methodist Church recognized, officially, the David Elkins buried in the old Conley burial ground, located about a mile and a half southeast of Bryantsville, on a little knoll alongside the old Spice Valley Church road as being the man, who came in response to a message from his young friend, the boy Abraham Lincoln to the Little Pigeon Creek settlement in Spencer county to preach the funeral service over the grave of the bereaved boy's mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, months after her death.

This David Elkins came to Lawrence county about 1840, settling near Bryantsville and preaching in the old Spice Valley Baptist Church. Although the identity of the Lawrence county David Elkins had been questioned by Lincoln writers and biographers, the Indiana Conference, after examining numerous affidavits, recognized him as being the man who did preach the funeral service and placed a monument of Indiana limestone over the grave, which is enclosed in by a wrought iron fence donated by ex-Senator Charles W. Lanz. The monument bears the following inscription:

DAVID ELKINS
PIONEER PREACHER OF THE WILDERNESS
IN MARCH, 1819 HE PREACHED
THE FUNERAL SERMON OF
NANCY HANKS LINCOLN.
AT THE REQUEST OF HER NINE YEAR OLD SON
ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

District 10
Lawrence County
File # 48.

(Copy)

Submitted by : Emery C Turner
1526 2nd St.
Bedford, Ind.

Point of Interest Near Bedford (Historic)

GRAVE OF DAVID ELKINS

(not in city limits)

Reference:

A - Mrs. Zora Askew, President Lawrence County Historical Society, Bedford, Indiana.

B - Rev. Elmer C. Norman, Lawrence County Assessor, Bedford, Ind.

Location: Old Connelly Cemetery. To reach from Bedford, travel the following itinerary: South two miles by way of Ind. 37 to its junction with U.S. 50; West via U.S. 50, 2½ miles to Knott cemetery; South 1½ miles via a country road; West ¾ mile via another country road (known locally as the old Port Williams and Hamer's Mill Road) to its intersection with the old Spice Valley Church Road. The Connelly Cemetery is approximately 100 yards west of this point. (B)

Visitors: Visitors are welcome to view the grave at any time without charge. (B)

For many years, a simple marker, such as is furnished by the government for its soldiers, informed any chance visitor that David Elkins, a man beloved by the martyred President Lincoln, lay buried there.

Tradition tells us that David Elkins, one of the early Methodist circuit riders who traveled on foot and on horseback through Kentucky and into the wilderness of southern Indiana, preaching the gospel to the pioneer settlers, was a great friend of the Thomas Lincoln family and was greatly beloved by young Abraham. When the mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, died ## in 1818, at the Little Pigeon Creek settlement, in Spencer county, the lad, yearning for the comfort and solace of a minister's words, wrote a painstaking appeal to his old friend, entrusting it to a traveler, bound for Kentucky. Months afterward,

Elkins made his way to the Spencer county settlement to pay tribute to the woman who was destined to become known as the mother of the greatest American, Abraham Lincoln.

History records that later David Elkins came to Lawrence county, Indiana, with his family, in the early 'Forties, settling on a farm near Bryantsville, in Spice Valley township. During his lifetime in Lawrence county, he preached at the Rock Lick Methodist-Baptist church, in Marion township, at Hick's Chapel and at Bryantsville, as well as holding meetings at the homes in the rural districts of the county.

The grave of David Elkins is now marked by a stone memorial shaft, properly inscribed. The shaft was dedicated in 1935 by the Indiana Methodist Episcopal Conference during their sessions held at Bedford. The grave is also surrounded by an iron fence, donated by Charles W. Lanz, former United States Senator from Indiana. (A)

Interview with Fields Elkin - Elizabethtown, June 21, 1922

My grandfather's name was David Elkin. He was a minister of the Separate Baptist Church, and lived near what is now the community of Mt. Sherman, close to the Green County line. I do not know what my grandmother's name was. My grandfather was still living in the same community at the time of his death. My father has told me about the visit which grandfather Elkin made to his two sons Hodgen and Warren Elkin, my father's brothers, who had moved to Indiana. He said that it was on this trip that he preached the funeral sermon of Nancy Hanks. My parents have told me that when my grandfahter first went to preaching he did not know but one letter in the alphabet and that was the letter o, and he knew it because it was round, but in his old age he could read the whole bible through by heart. He used to preach at the Little Mount Church. I have no idea when he died nor where he is buried.

My father was also named David Elkin, being named for my grandfather. He had one older brother by the name of Hodgen Elkin who was a Baptist minister. He moved to Indiana and later to Illinois. A younger brother, Warren also went to Indiana and later went further west. There was one sister I remember by the name of Betsy. After my father was married in 1838, to Elizabeth Banningfield, he farmed the following year with his father, and then set up house keeping himself. My grandfather later in his life came to live with my father in Green County. My father died at the age of ninety years in 1902 and is buried in the old Mt. Morian church yard.

My name is Fields Elkin and I was born in Green County in 1869, the youngest of 14 children. I have but one brother living. I have lived in Elizabethtown for 12 years, and now live near the old Haycraft spring where Mrs. Haycraft shot the Indian.

August 10, [illegible]

Mr. E. T. Sweeney
[illegible]
Bedford, Ind.

Dear Sir:

I am very glad to have from you [illegible] valuable relation to our Civil War.

I regret that Nicolay [illegible] not [illegible] us to [illegible] the question more specifically. [illegible] Parentage and Childhood," which is to be published by The Century Co. [illegible] give [illegible] to the question of Lincoln's legal illegitimacy.

If you should discover any further information bearing on the question I should like very much to have your findings. As I am now collecting [illegible] for an Indiana History of the Lincolns, [illegible] pertaining to the Tarwell marriage of Nancy Hanks I would consider very valuable source material.

You will probably be interested to learn that I shall have an article in The Century Magazine for September entitled the caption "Lincoln's Immediate Ancestry."

I hope that we may have an opportunity some time for a conference of the Lincoln [illegible].

Sincerely yours,

E. Y. GUERNSEY
1421 O STREET
BEDFORD, INDIANA

Rev. Louis A. Warren,
Zionsville, Indiana,

Dear Mr. Warren:

Your article in the current "Magazine of History" recalls the promise I made you to send information relative to Rev. David Elkins, this unfulfilled promise having been made quite some time ago. When I saw you I had planned to trace the Elkins story as far as it pertains to Lawrence county; but other matters of research called my attention and the Elkins matter was shelved. It would have been possible, at that time, to have secured the statement of Mr. Joe A. Burton, who knew Rev. Elkins quite well, but he, as well as Mr. Wood another friend, died something like a year ago. So far I have not discovered any other individuals who knew Elkins during his residence here.

The matter of Elkins' relation with the Lincoln family appears not to be a tradition, but, as I have it, was related by Elkins himself to Mr. Burton, Mr. Wood and others of his friends in Lawrence county. The Elkins farm, at which he died, was across the road and only a few rods from his burial place. The house is not now standing and another has been erected upon the site. The Elkins spring, however, is still pointed out. The two churches at which Rev. Elkins preached were known as Spice Valley Baptist, and Rock Lick Baptist - the latter having served the Methodists as well. The Methodist congregation gave it the name of Hick's Chapel. The Spice Valley church burned in 1832 and another church was built upon its site. The Rock Lick church was taken down something like twenty years ago, and rebuilt to serve as a camping place for some young men of Bedford. Moved from its original site, it now stands quite near White River, upon the Will Kelly farm. It has been called "Kelly Castle" since its removal. It, as is the case of the Spice Valley church, was of logs.

The deed records of this county will doubtless show when the farm known as the Elkins farm came into his possession, and I hope to be able to look up these records, and to determine whether there are neighbors still living who remember him sufficiently to give reliable information. There is no doubt in my mind that the David Elkins of Lawrence county was the Elkin of Lincoln association. Mr. Burton's account was to the effect that Elkins served as a "circuit rider"- preaching at various points in the Ohio River counties, and going back, frequently, to Kentucky.

This letter is written quite hurriedly, and without recourse to my notes on the matter. The historical importance of the Elkins association is perhaps not of great importance; but I deem it worthy of careful investigation. Even if I were not convinced of the reliability of the story of Elkins' associates here- I should feel that the assurance of David Elkins emigration from Kentucky, the identity of names and the fact that he was a Baptist minister would supply sufficient groundwork to warrant a more partcular study.

Yours very truly,

E. Y. Guernsey

Donna Elkins

November 6, 1928

Mr. E. R. Gurnsey
1421 O Street
Bedford, Indiana

My dear Mr. Gurnsey:

A recent catalogue came to my desk in which I discovered a page given over to Indian items.

There may be some books in this list which you would like to have and I can vouch for the reliability of Mr. Newhall as I have had much dealings with him.

Although this may be forwarded to you in Florida if you have already left, it may not be too late to secure some of these numbers.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Respectfully yours,

_____ Director,
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation.

LAN:VL

Conley, Alfred . Daniel Elkin

Myrtle Creek Oregon
Jan 16 -28

Mr Louis A Thorsen
Yincoill Ind

Dear Sir your communication at hand and I have to say that I cant answer but one of your questions Daniel Elkin left two Children that I no of Rev Isaac Hogan Elkin that gave the Information that I wrote the Republic and A. Brother Warren Elkin but I dont know what became of him I will refer you to Rev W. A. Sanders of Mitchell Ind

who may be able to
help you he has lived
in that section of the
Country all his life
and knows all the old
People in the Country
and I am sure will do
all he can to help you
ask him to search the
Church Records of the
Old Speice Valley Baptist
Church Its organisation
dates back one hundr
ed years or more
and David Elkin
living and doing there
In all Probability was
Pastor of that Church
at same time

and I think that if you
will write Miss Mary
Conley Sailor Springs
Ill that she can give
you the address of
some of Rev J H Elkins
familey she is a
Cousin to the Elkins
Children and I think
that you may be
able to get the date of
his birth an death
from his grave stone
Conrad Isam Burton
of Mitchell Ind wrote
me seem twenty years
ago hunting up the
Elkins familey trying
the money Record of
Daniel Elkins

he was wanting to
get a Government stone
or marker for the
grave and if the grave
had no grave Rock
he Probably could
not have located it
at that late date
I hope that this may
help you get the Infor
mation you seek
Very Respectfully
Alfred Conley

Sailor Springs Ill
July 19 - 1928

Mr Lewis. A. Sheeren
Williamsville Ill
Dear Sir I wrote you from
Myrtle Creek Oregon some
months ago giving you what
knowledge I had of the
David Elkins family. I gave
you the P.O address of Mary Conley
Sailor Springs Ills and she tells me
that she received your letter but
as there was no return postage sent
she paid no attention to it. I wrote
you in regard to Rev J. H. Elkins
son of Rev David Elkins
Mrs J. A. P. Patrick (6) Bridgeport Ills
is a daughter of the Rev J. H. Elkins
and a granddaughter of David Elkins
she may be able to give you some
information of the family. Alfred Conley

5

August 28, 1928

Mrs. Z. A. Patrick
Bridgeport, Illinois

My dear Mrs. Patrick:

I have been advised by Mr. Alfred Cauley that you might be able to give me some information about Rev. David Elkin who presided at the funeral of Nancy Hanks Lincoln.

I am especially anxious to learn where he lies buried and whether or not there are any traditions in the family about this famous funeral service.

I would appreciate very much any information you could give me in this respect.

Respectfully yours,

_____
Director,
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation.

LAW:VL

David Elkin

July 26, 1929
Dict. July 25

Mrs. Virginia Russell
Magnolia, Kentucky

My dear Mrs. Russell:

I was recently in Hodgenville, Kentucky and while there was advised you were a granddaughter of David Elkin, who presided at the funeral service of Nancy Hanks Lincoln.

I was also informed that at some time there had been in the possession of the family a letter which Abraham Lincoln wrote to Rev. David Elkin.

Have you any idea where this letter is at present, or where it was last seen to your knowledge? I should like very much to trace it.

The next time I go to Kentucky I shall try and make it a point to see you, but in the meantime I would very much appreciate the information which I have asked for in this letter.

Respectfully yours,

Director
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation

LAW:EB

Magnolia Ky
August 13. 1929.
The Lincoln National
Life Insurance Comp'any

Dear Sir will rite you letter
I received some time ago
I would of written sooner
but have been waiting to
find out something about
the letter the Lincoln
wrote to my grand father
but I am sorry to say I
dont know any thing
about it But airin off
Melvin furnace Hart
County had it the last
time I heard anything about
it if I find out any thing
about it will let you know
respectfully Russell

(11)

August 19, 1929

Mrs. Virginia Russell
Magnolia, Kentucky

My dear Mrs. Russell:

I was very glad, indeed, to receive your letter as I am very much interested in David Talkin.

I want to bother you again by asking you if you remember just how the letter was worded and how long it has been since you have seen it. I have written to Bert Aikin in the hope that he may be able to find it for me.

If you hear anything further about it I wish you would let me know as I am especially anxious to learn just what the letter said.

Respectfully yours,

_____ Director
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation

LAW:LH

Magnolia Ky
August 21 1929.

Mr Warren
The life insurance co
will write a few lines
as well as your letter can
say. I can't give you
the information you
want it has been a year
now, 30 years since I saw
the letter. The paper said
my grandfather was
killed here by Indians and
preach the funeral and
rode horseback as there
was no trains running
out when he got there
she went his father was
in the woods working
rails. It has been the

2

since I saw the letter I
did not pay much attention
but I didn't think it
has been as over a year
amount to any thing

If I find out any thing
more about it I will
let you know

Virginia Russell

(Elkins)

August 16, 1929

Mr. Bert Aikin
Attna Furnace
Hart County, Ky.

My Bear Mr Aikin:

I was recently in Hodgenville where I lived for several years and edited the La Rue County Herald.

While there I learned that at one time you had in your posession the letter which Abraham Lincoln wrote to Rev David Elkin.

I am wondering if you know whether or not the letter has been prrserved and if so who has it. If you do not know where it now is can be located do you remember what the letter said.

The company for which I am now working is making a collection of old Lincoln letters and would be very glad to pay you a good price if you can find it.

I should be very glad to hear from you.

Respectfully,

Office of
Assistant Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

WASHINGTON

August 29, 1929.

Dr, John A. Gibbons,
714 W. Warren St.,
Mitchell, Indiana.

My dear Dr. Gibbons:

I have your letter of August 27, 1929, with reference to Rev. David Elkins whose grave is west of Mitchell, unmarked, as I understand it and largely unknown. I can give you no information that would be of much weight to assist you in establishing the fact that Rev. Elkins preached the funeral sermon of the mother of Abraham Lincoln.

I have heard my father repeatedly recite this circumstance and he had some information, not documentary, but just what it was I do not know. I recall that some time in the past some profes or from Indiana University was looking up Rev. Elkins connection with Abraham Lincoln and his mother, and I think my father gave him whatever information he had. If my memory serves me correctly one of the Indianapolis papers at some time in the distant past had some reference to this subject we are now discussing. An inquiry might be directed to the Indiana University if the University has any information in any of the files relative to the matter about which you inquire. Personally I know of no one to whom you might go for definite information.

The time inquired about is long ago and practically all of those who had any information on the subject have passed into the Great Beyond. I regret very much that I cannot give you any documentary evidence or refer you to any. I can only say that repeatedly, I have heard my father comment on the fact that Rev. Elkins, whose grave is in the vicinity of Mitchell, is the man who preached the funeral sermon of the mother of Lincoln and there my information ends.

Sincerely yours,

James H. Edwards.

James M. Knapp, Speaker
Albert B. Snyder, Clerk

Everett J. Sewlin, Chief Doorkeeper
Ira A. Brown, Associate Clerk.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

of the

STATE OF INDIANA

House of Representatives.

Indianapolis, Sept. 7, 1929.

Dr. John A, Gibbons,
Indianapolis, Indiana.

Dear Doctor Gibbons:

I have just received and read your very interesting letter. Like you, I am quite sure we are on the right track in respect to the David Elkins matter. I was pretty well convinced of this when Dr. Warren, whom I consider the most accurate and thorough of the Lincoln biographers, told me recently he was not so positive that his former statement in regard to the matter could be verified. When he was here last he went over certain old records at the court-house in an effort to establish the identity of a certain Mrs. Wilson, wife of a Revolutionary war veteran who was a pioneer in this county. He was quite sure that she was an actual relative of the Lincolns in Virginia, and one whom biographers had not yet been able to locate.

You may be sure I shall be glad to see Mrs. Flick with you, and to make the trip to her home in Southern Indiana. As you know, I have been kept pretty busy with the varying activities of the Department - but I shall soon have a let up, I hope.

I have been very much interested, for years, in establishing a county museum. The other day I went over the new court-house plans with the architect; and we have planned an admirable room (or rather two rooms) for this purpose. One room is to be an assembly room, sixty feet or more long; the other, connecting with it, will have ample space for museum exhibits. The pioneer material you have, including the Indian relics, should properly go to Spring Mill - I think - while the Civil War material would work in admirably in the county museum. As I organized the County Historical Society myself, or largely so, you may understand that I'm as much interested in one project as the other. Though I was not born in this county, I do not feel that I have done as much as any single individual to preserve the history and traditions of Lawrence County. At least I have spent much time and research upon it.

I shall see you quite soon; but hope you will continue your work on the Elkins matter, when and as you can. I will have much supplementary matter to add to what you secure.

With kindest regards and interest,

Sincerely,

E.Y.Guernsey

1421 O Street

Bedford, Indiana.

Dr. John A. Gibbons,
Mitchell, Indiana.

Dear Dr. Gibbons:

In extension of my other letter, herewith enclosed, and in further connection with the Elkins matter:

Your conversation with the various persons named, which you report, seems to me to have brought acceptable proof that our David Elkins is, in fact, the Elkins of Lincoln association. We should, by all means, get the deposition of Mr. Blackwell (which is most important, coming from one who knew Elkins personally) - and, in addition that of Mrs. Flick. Also I think we should endeavor to secure from Mrs. Flick any information she can give which will show the Kentucky residence of Elkins. Surely someone of her relatives can supply this information, and they should be able to give, in addition, some genealogical data - such as the name of Elkins' wife before marriage - the names of his children, etcetera.

I am enclosing leaves cut from the Indiana Magazine of History June, 1926, which are self-explanatory. Please have these so I can reinsert in my copy. I find in another issue (March, 1926) the statement by Bess Ehrmann, of Rockport, that some pictures of descendants are extant. Here is the exact copy of the paragraph:

"11 - Some historical pictures of granddaughter and great-grandson of Rev. David Elkins taken at Nancy Hanks Lincoln's grave. Rev. Elkins was the minister who preached the belated funeral services of Nancy Hanks Lincoln."

In "The Life of Abraham Lincoln For Boys and Girls", by Charles W. Moore (page 14), is the best account of the Elkins funeral episode I have yet found. I will bring my copy over for you to see soon. Here the name is pselled Elkin. I think the sketch in pen-and-ink, of the funeral service, is to be found in Herndon's "Life of Lincoln". At all events it is in the Bedford Library.

I have never thought otherwise than that our David Elkins was the Elkins of Lincoln association; and it has been my idea that the association between Elkins and Lincoln was more intimate, and of more importance than we have thought. It is probable that Elkins came to Lawrence County for residence at a somewhat late date - probably preaching along his circuit prior to his removal here. Likely the circuit included Orange, Dubois and Spencer counties - and moreover, it is not unlikely that Elkins came to Indiana because of his friendship for the Lincolns.

While the fact that David Elkins preached Nancy Hanks Lincoln's funeral sermon is important enough in itself, it has seemed to me that it might be possible to dig up letters or other data which would prove that Elkins had a more important association with the family than we now know about.

Will see you quite soon,

Sincerely,

E.Y. Guernsey.

Indiana Magazine of History

Minor Notices

The Grave of David Elkins

It is not generally known that Rev. David Elkins, who preached the funeral of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of Abraham Lincoln, is buried in a little country graveyard a few miles west of Mitchell, Ind. Such, however, is true history; and peeping out from among the accumulation of weeds and grass today may be seen in that little neglected country graveyard a modest little gravestone, only fifteen inches high, bearing the inscription "David Elkins, 2 S. C. Mil. War 1812."

The Lincoln family moved from Kentucky to Spencer county, Indiana, in 1816. Lincoln was then about 8 years old; about a year later the mother died. In those days it was not always possible to have a preacher in the neighborhood at the time of death and the memorial, or funeral sermons were often preached at some convenient time after the death. A few months after his mother's death he wrote to a Baptist preacher by the name of David Elkins, who was a neighbor of the Lincolns in Kentucky, and asked him to their home to preach his mother's funeral. Some months later Elkins concluded to comply with the request of the lad and in 1818 set out on horseback for the home of the Lincolns, almost 100 miles away.

Young Lincoln at the same time started to visit Reverend Elkins with a view to inducing him to come to Indiana and pay the tribute of respect that he felt was due the memory of his mother. Somewhere on the road the two met and Elkins returned with Lincoln and preached the funeral at the Lincoln home, which is near Lincoln City in Spencer county.

Elkins, who was a soldier in the war of 1812 moved to a farm about four miles northwest of Mitchell some time in the forties. He died in 1857 and is buried in the little cemetery above mentioned. It is remembered that Elkins often spoke of the 10-year-old lad who was so devoted to his mother. David Elkins is well remembered by a few people still living here. They are Judge W. H. Edwards, Henry J. Tirey, Thomas Tow and Aunt Phoebe Burton. —*The Mitchell Tribune,* Oct. 21, 1915.

STATE OF INDIANA)
Lawrence County) ss:

Personally appeared before me, Mary Cutsinger, a Notary Public, in and for said County and State, Harrison Blackwell, who being by me first duly sworn upon his oath, deposes and says:

That he was born in Orange County, Indiana, September 13th, 1840, and that he has lived in Lawrence County eighty (80) years.

Deponent further says that he was personally acquainted with Rev. David Elkins, and that he has heard him preach many times, during a period of years.

Deponent further says that he has heard the said David Elkins make the statement that he knew Abraham Lincoln, and that he conducted the funeral services of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of the President, Abraham Lincoln, and that he knew David Elkins to be buried in the Conley Cemetery of Lawrence County, Indiana.

This information was obtained by Dr. John A. Gibbons, Mitchell, Indiana.

Harrison Blackwell

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 13th day of September, 1930.

(Notarial Seal) Mary Cutsinger

My Commission expires September 4th, 1933.

STATE OF INDIANA)
Lawrence County) ss:

Before me, Mary Cutsinger, a Notary Public in and for the said County and State, personally appeared this 13th day of September, 1929, Thomas A. Tirey, who being by me first duly sworn upon his oath, according to law, deposes and says:

That he was born in Lawrence County, Indiana, on the 5th day of April, 1862, and that he has lived in Lawrence County practically all of his life.

Deponent further says that he has often heard his father, Henry J. Tirey, who lived in Lawrence County, Indiana, say that he knew David Elkins conducted the funeral service of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of the President, Abraham Lincoln and that David Elkins was buried in the Conley Cemetery, Lawrence County, Indiana.

This information was obtained by Dr. John A. Gibbons, Mitchell, Indiana.

Thomas A. Tirey

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 13th day of September, 1929.

(Notarial Seal) Mary Cutsinger

My Commission expires September 4th, 1933.

STATE OF INDIANA }
Lawrence County } ss:

Before me, Mary Cutsinger, a Notary Public, in and for the said County and State, personally appeared Henry Burton on the 1st day of March, 1930, who being by me first duly sworn upon his oath, according to law, deposes and says:

That he was born in Lawrence County, State of Indiana, on the 20th day of July, 1867, and that he has lived in Lawrence County, State of Indiana for sixty-two years.

Deponent further says that he is the son of David E. Burton, who was born in North Carolina and has heard his father, David E. Burton say that he was a member of the Spice Valley Baptist Church when the Rev. David Elkins was the pastor there; that his father knew the Rev. David Elkins personally and has heard Rev. David Elkins say quite often that he preached Nancy Hanks Lincoln's funeral, the Mother of the President, Abraham Lincoln. Deponent further declares that his father, David E. Burton bought the farm from the Elkins estate after the death of the Rev. David Elkins.

Deponent further states that he knows that the Rev, David Elkins is buried in the Conley and Burton cemetery, near his home, on what is known as a part of the Conley place, where deponent's mother was born and raised.

This information was obtained by Dr. John A. Gibbons, Mitchell, Indiana.

Henry Burton

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 1st day of March, 1930.

(Notarial Seal) Mary Cutsinger

My Commission expires September 4th, 1933.

STATE OF INDIANA)
Lawrence County) ss:

Before me, Mary Cutsinger, a Notary Public, in and for the said County and State, personally appeared this 14th day of September, 1929, Grant Erwin, who being by me first duly sworn upon his oath, according to law, deposes and says:

That he was born in Lawrence County, Indiana, on the 23rd day of May, 1864, and that he has lived in Lawrence County all of his life.

Deponent further says that he has often heard his father, Asa Erwin, who was born and lived in Lawrence County all of his life, and that he was personally acquainted with Rev. David Elkins, and that he has often heard his father say that David Elkins conducted the funeral of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of the President, Abraham Lincoln.

And that Rev. David Elkins was buried in the Conley Cemetery, Lawrence County, Indiana.

Grant Erwin

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 14th day of September, 1929.

This information was obtained by Dr. John A. Gibbons, Mitchell, Indiana.

(Notarial Seal)

Mary Cutsinger
NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission expires September 4th, 1933.

STATE OF INDIANA)
Lawrence County) ss:

Before me, Percy C. Kemp, a Notary Public, in and for the said County and State, personally appeared on this 21st day of September, 1929, Theodore Greer, who being by me first duly sworn upon his oath, according to law, deposes and says:

That he was born in Lawrence County, State of Indiana, on the 8th day of May, 1868, and that he has lived in said County and State all his life.

Deponent further says that he is the son of Jesse Greer and that he has often heard his father say that Rev. David Elkins preached and conducted the funeral of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of the president, Abraham Lincoln.

Deponent further says that he knows that the said Rev. David Elkins is buried in the Conley Cemetery, in Lawrence County, State of Indiana.

This information was obtained by Dr. John A. Gibbons, Mitchell, Indiana.

Theo Greer

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 21st day of September, 1929.

(Notarial Seal)

Percy C. Kemp
NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission expires October 8th, 1930.

STATE OF INDIANA)
Lawrence County) ss:

Before me, Mary Cutsinger, a Notary Public, in and for the said County and State, personally appeared Richard D. Burton on the 23rd day of May, 1931, who being by me first duly sworn upon his oath, according to law, deposeth and sayeth:

That he was born in Lawrence County, State of Indiana, on the 13th day of October, 1888, and has lived in Lawrence County for 41 years.

Deponent further says that he is the son of Henry Burton, who was born in Indiana. My grandmother, Catherine Burton, wife of David E. Burton, told me, when I was about 12 years of age, that the body of Rev. David Elkins was brought to the Conley Cemetery one morning about 11 o'clock, in my grandfather's, David E. Burton's spring wagon, and interment took place there. After the burial the rest of the Elkins family remained at the David E. Burton farm for dinner. The Rev. David Elkins referred to is the same man who preached the funeral of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of President Abraham Lincoln.

Deponent further states that his father, Henry Burton, sold the deed to the Conley Cemetery where the body of Rev. David Elkins was buried. This Conley Cemetery is located 1½ miles east of Bryantsville, Lawrence County, State of Indiana.

This information was obtained by Mr. John A. Gibbons, Mitchell, Indiana.

Richard D. Burton

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 23rd day of May, 1931.

(Notarial Seal) Mary Cutsinger

My Commission expires September 4th, 1933.

STATE OF INDIANA)
Lawrence County) ss:

Before me, Percy C. Kemp, a Notary Public, in and for the said County and State, personally appeared on this 21st day of September, 1929, Anna Flick, who being by me first duly sworn upon her oath, according to law, deposes and says:

That she was born in Orange County, State of Indiana, on the 10th day of January, 1858, and that she has lived in Lawrence County, State of Indiana for 35 years.

Deponent further says that she is the daughter-in-law of Mrs. Frances Elkins Flick and that Mrs. Frances Elkins Flick is the daughter of Rev. David Elkins and that she has heard her mother-in-law, Mrs. Frances Elkins Flick state on numerous occasions that her father- Rev. David Elkins preached and conducted the funeral of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of the President, Abraham Lincoln.

Anna Flick

This information was obtained by Dr. John A. Gibbons, Mitchell, Indiana.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 21st day of September, 1929.

(Notarial Seal)

Percy C. Kemp

NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission expires October 9th, 1930.

STATE OF INDIANA)
Lawrence County) ss:

Before me, Mary Cutsinger, a Notary Public, in and for the said County and State, personally appeared Douglas L. Burton on the 30th day of March, 1931, who being by me first duly sworn upon his oath, according to law, deposeth and sayeth:

That he was born in Lawrence County, State of Indiana, on the 4th day of November, 1857, and that he has lived in Lawrence County, State of Indiana for more than seventy-three years.

Deponent further states that he is the son of Eli Burton and Phoebe Conley Burton, and that his father was born in North Carolina, and he has heard both his parents, and his grandmother, Mrs. Margaret Conley, say that they were acquainted with Rev. David Elkins, personally, and that he preached the funeral of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of the President, Abraham Lincoln. That Rev. David Elkins also visited in the Burton home and also held meetings in the home.

Deponent further states that he is sure that Rev. David Elkins is buried in the Conley and Burton Cemetery, near his home, on what is known as a part of the Conley place.

Douglas L. Burton

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 30th day of March, 1931.

This information was obtained by Dr. John A. Gibbons, Mitchell, Indiana.

(Notarial Seal)

Mary Cutsinger
NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission expires September 4th, 1933.

Mitchell, Indiana.
April 26, 1930.

John A. Gibbons, M.D.
Mitchell, Indiana.

Esteemed Friend:

Pardon this delay in answer to your letter of some days since, but illness of myself is the cause. Yes, I can say I have heard my Mother tell of Rev. David Elkins preaching the funeral of Mrs. Lincoln. You come out next Monday afternoon and we can tell you many things. I have not time to write. I hope you will meet with success in this grand, good work.

Come Monday afternoon, April 28th.

Respct.,

Alice Pickett.

Eleanor Gridley Relates Tale of Her Trip to Lincoln Country — and Its Highlights

Hyde Park Lincoln Authority Interviews Mrs. Virginia Russell

Mrs. Eleanor Gridley, 5844 Harper, one of the most eminent authorities on Lincoln in the country, took an interesting motor trip last summer with her granddaughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. F. M. Wright, and her great grandson, F. M. Wright Jr. to the Lincoln country, Louisville, Elizabethtown, Harrodsberg, Hodgenville, and Springfield, Ky. The party covered over 1,200 miles in 5 days, with the thermometer from 100 to 112 degrees every day. The territory abounded in Lincoln shrines, shrines of bronze, of marble, of granite —symbols of loyalty, of adoration, beautiful tributes erected by a grateful nation. One of the high points in the trip was the interview which Mrs. Gridley had with Mrs. Virginia Russell, granddaughter of Parson Elder who preached the sermon over the grave of Lincoln's mother eight months after she had died. Here is Mrs. Gridley's own account of the experience:

Impatient to be getting on we made haste; a short rapid drive brought us to Hodgenville the goal of our quest. On the crest of the hill the massive structure rises to "heights sublime." Its chaste simplicity enthralls and captivates the beholder. May I never, so long as I shall live, be denied the memory of this vision.

In a country unknown to the Greeks of storied sculpture; midst its native forest the chiseled memorial monument stands—that the whole wide world may see the immortal shrine, dedicated to Abraham Lincoln—humble citizen of our great commonwealth—the Nation's tribute expressive of love and homage.

Across the lowlands we wandered. Pausing beside the "Sinking Spring" from which Nancy Hanks Lincoln so often drew water to furnish her children and cattle with drink, we also drank and were refreshed.

The approach to the memorial is by a magnificant stairway of many steps. On the broad platform at the top of the stairway, we paused to read, above the entrance, the inscription—"Over the log cabin where Abraham Lincoln was born, destined to preserve the Union and free the slave, a grateful people have dedicated this memorial to unity, peace and brotherhood." Within the building are a number of inscriptions. The one I like best to remember contains the first two lines of Edward Markham's tribute.

"He was the North, the South, the East, the West, the Truth, the Master, all of us in one."

The birth cabin stands in the center of the Memorial building. It is a

(Continued on page 8)

homely old habitation—12 by 17 feet, with two openings— a doorless door, a windowless window and a dirt floor, just as it was one hundred and twenty-one years ago. The cabin protected by a strong iron chain so far away that no one may touch it. Seldom, if ever, is anyone allowed to enter the cabin. To my astonishment and inexpressible delight, the custodian invited me "to step within," and added, "Take your time; stay as long as you like."

I entered; the present vanished; the past unfolded in spectral review. Time had turned backward and Nancy Hanks Lincoln had entered her Garden of Gethsemani. The agony of childbirth was racking her body and torturing her spirit. Alone and unaided, she would have been, had not a kindly neighbor "dropped in to see how Nancy wus gittin' along." The babe was born and Nancy was content. Her man child had come in response to her prayer. I was suffocating. I was sobbing. Emerging from the semi-darkness of the old cabin I would have forced the confines of the barricade had not the custodian detered me, saying, "Please a few words; these people are waiting to hear you."

Standing in the doorway of that lowly cabin, my eyes swimming in an ocean of tears, I told my story of "Nancy Hanks Lincoln and Her Wonderful Boy."

Just beyond the circle of listening visitors, a woman was beckoning me. When we were apart she unfolded a marvelous tale. "We are strangers here," I said, and begged her to show us the way, to lead us to the abode of her heroine. After considerable persuasion the narrator consented, and away we drove over unimproved and seldom traveled roads. Up and down hills, and across fields we followed the trail until an old fashioned gate barred our progress. 'Twas a primitive gate, secured by a bent wire hooked over a large nail. Under the manipulation of our leader, the gate swung ajar and drove on to the yard proper. Encountering the master of the manor, seated on a rude bench, whittling. We inquired. "Is Mrs. Russell at home?" His laconic reply, "I reckon she is," pleased us and we drove along a short distance, stopping at the front door of the slab house, hoary with age. The door was opened by a woman of native dignity and unruffled presence with the soft Southern drawl she greeted us. "Howdy," she said, and, "Won't you come in?"

We entered; the room was meagerly furnished—two splint bottom chairs, a rocker, two beds with patch-work quilts and a clock, on a shelf, completed the furnishings.

In a flurry lest my first question defeat my purpose, I hesitated—then "Please, Mrs. Russell, tell me, did you ever hear of Parson Elkins." Her prompt reply, "I reckon I have," was positive and friendly. I was confused as to the next question, which must be adroit and to the point." "How was he related to you?" I ventured. "He was my grandpaw," she replied. "Do you remember your grandfather?" elicited a longer reply. "No," she said, 'He died when I wus a little girl but my Maw hez told me a right smart bit about her paw. She told us her paw got a letter from little Abe Lincoln—writin' him to preach and pray over his maw's grave." "Did he go?" I scarcely concealed my agitation while awaiting her reply. "Yes, I reckon he did fur Maw said he rode off on the old bay mare to Indiany to preach the funeral sermon. Maw said he was sorry fur the little boy."

The past—a panorama of dissolving views interposed, I did not indulge in retrospection. "Where is that letter?" I asked in an excited tone of voice "It got lost, I reckon," she calmly replied. My next question, tinctured with censure was rather brusquely propounded "Why didn't your people save it?' I demanded. Parson Elkins' granddaughter was silent, as if "lost in thought." Changing her position, she looked through the open door, across the fields and on beyond to the hills of beautiful Kentucky. She did not speak My patience was breaking when her reply came. "I reckon," she said, "nobody knowed Abe Lincoln would," and her voice trailed off into a half whisper, "git to be—President of the United States."

I rose from my splint-bottom chair and putting my arm about Parson Elkins' granddaughter urged her. "Please, let us go out into the yard and take your picture." An expression of regret shadowed her countenance and she demurred by saying, "I'm too old to have my picture taken." Disregarding my usual code of propriety and politeness I inquired, "How old are you, Mrs. Russell?" "I am eighty-one," she murmured. Courage ordered the assault and unblushingly I announced my seniority by saying, "I am three years further along on the trail than you are." This settled her objection and after Parson Elkins' granddaughter and I had been "taken together," Mrs. Russell willingly posed for us, all by herself.

Parson Elkins' granddaughter and I had much to say to each other—much that neither one of us will ever forget, I am sure.

In parting the leader of our party remarked, "What a pile of shavings (an enormous pile) you have Mr. Russell, and what are you going to do with them?" 'Nawthing; I'm jest whittlin," was the Kentuckian's reply, while his wife, scarcely moving the fan she held in her hand, meditated aloud. "Yes," she said, "Joe is jest whittlin. We've lived here more thirty-two years and I reckon Joe's been whittlin about thirty years." I did not smile. I could not.

My story of Little Abe and Parson Elkins, related to me by a near kin of Abraham Lincoln, has been questioned—pronounced "romance" pure and simple. But now Parson Elkins' granddaughter has vindicated me and reliable witnesses heard the vindication.

CHICAGO ILL HYDE PK HERALD
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1931.

ALBERT J. FIELDS
ATTORNEY AT LAW
BEDFORD, IND.

October 28, 1932.

Dr. Louis Warren,
Lincoln Life Insurance Co.,
Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Dear Doctor Warren:

Knowing that you are considered an authority upon the life of Abraham Lincoln and his family, I wish to call your attention to a subject of some controversy with reference to the David Elkins who issaid to have preached the funeral of Abraham Lincoln's mother.

To make my letter brief, a David Elkins is buried in Lawrence County. He was a Baptist Preacher who lived and preached in southern Indiana and Kentucky at the time of the death of Lincoln's mother. We would like for you to make a personal investigation while there is still at least one living witness who talked with David Elkins during his lifetime. Harrison Blackwell of Mitchell, Ind., now more than ninety years of age has made the statement repeatedly and we have his affidavit in which he says that this David Elkins who is buried in Lawrence County, told him on several occasions that he preached Lincoln's mother's funeral. Anna Flick of Mitchell, Indiana, whose mother was a daughter of David Elkins as we have it, has made an affidavit that her mother told her repeatedly that her father preached the funeral of Abraham Lincoln's mother. We have a number of affidavits on this subject, which affidavits are now in the possession of Dr. John Gibbons, Mitchell, Indiana. I shall not attempt to tell you all the evidence collected on this subject, but certainly think it is worth while that while old Mr. Blackwell is still living, and while Mrs. Flick is still living, that you make an effort at once to get in touch with them if you so desire.

We would be glad to have you come to Bedford, and Mrs. Harry Askew, (Representative in the State Legislature, E. Y. Guernsey) and myself will give you every assistance possible in an effort to definitely determine whether or not this David Elkins was the David Elkins who preached the funeral of Lincoln's mother. We would suggest that you come as soon as you can after the election, for Mr. Guernsey is a candidate for reelection, and probably would not to give it time until after November 8th.

Assuring you that we will appreciate any attention you may give to this matter, I am

Yours truly,

Albert Fields

AJF:C

November 1, 1932

Mr. Albert J. Fields
Bedford, Indiana

My dear Mr. Fields:

Enclosed you will please find a photostat copy of a brief item I prepared on David Elkins sometime ago, which I think might serve as a basis for your local study.

You will observe that the enclosed monograph is largely based on documentary records.

It seems to me that your first task would be to harmonize the fact that the David Elkins who died in Bedford County enlisted in the War of 1812 from Richmond District, North Carolina.

Of course, you will readily observe that the Rev. David Elkin who was the Lincoln preacher in Kentucky, had been in Kentucky since the year 1800.

Personally, I would be very happy if it could be shown that the David Elkins who preached the funeral service for Abraham Lincoln's mother was buried in Indiana.

I do not know of any way, however, that I might assist you in what seems to be purely a local task of getting a brief biographical sketch of a man buried at Bedford.

Very sincerely yours,

Director
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation

LAW:LH
Enc.

Springfield, Ill.
May 5, 1933

Mr. Louis A. Warren,
Zionsville, Indiana

Dear Mr. Warren:-

I have thought about writing you for a long time to tell you how much I have enjoyed your book, "Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood." And, also to tell you of our connection to the David Elkin, mentioned in your book, but have hesitated doing so for fear I would seem presumptous.

I read your book for the first time a few years ago but since then have procured it a number of times to prove by your printed facts, obtained by court records, public documents and authentic evidence, discrepancies in other writers' of Lincoln's life, and, especially of Herndon's Lincoln.

I am not a real student of Lincoln, but I am a great admirer of him, and, although I own and value Herndon's works; I am so glad to know someone was interested enough to go to the trouble to prove by facts that Lincoln's greatness was due in part, at least, by having ancestors, who were of good honest character.

My maternal grandfather, was Isaac Hodgen Elkin, a Baptist minister, and a son of the David Elkin, of whom you say: "No minister is more often associated with the early history of the Lincoln family than David Elkin." I notice your informant for some of the material concerning David Elkin was a Fields Elkin, son of David Elkin Jr.. I would like to get in touch with Fields Elkin as he and my mother must be first cousins.

My grandfather died when I was a young girl but I remember him often speaking of Abraham Lincoln and telling us that his father had received the first letter young Abraham ever composed, asking him to come to Indiana to preach his mother's funeral. So I am quite sure that was a fact.

My mother, who is Rose Elkin Sutton, was the youngest of six children and she does not remember much of her father's family history. She does not remember the names of her father's brothers.

I remember my grandfather would often

remark how sorry he was that none of his own sons became a minister. He would say: "There has been a minister in our family for generations." And he would speak of his father and grandfather who were Baptist ministers in Kentucky.

I believe his grandfather was Robert Elkin, a native of Virginia, who with another minister by the name of Lewis Craig, settled in what is now Gerrard county, Ky., in 1783. He died in Clark Co., Ky., in 1822.

I have been trying to connect up the three, Robert Elkin, David Elkin and Isaac Hodgen Elkin as father, son and grandson. I feel sure in my own mind of this relationship but cannot find enough information in our state and historical library to prove my belief.

My grandfather was born in Hodgenville, Ky., in 1820. Most of his ministry was spent in Illinois. He died at Iola, Clay Co., Ill., in 1899.

My mother has never believed that the David Elkins who is buried at Mitchell, Indiana, was her grandfather. Her family never used the final s in their name and she says her father spoke of his father being buried in Kentucky.

Would it be permissable for you to give me Fields Elkin's address. If it is, will you do so? I am enclosing a stamp for your reply.

Again let me tell you how much I have appreciated the time and effort you put fourth in making your book the authoritative source it is on Lincoln's parentage and childhood.

Very sincerely yours,

Elsie Sutton Hangsleben

(Mrs) Elsie Sutton Hangsleben,
429 Williams Blvd.,
Springfield, Ill.

Isaac Elkin

May 12, 1933

Mrs. Elsie Sutton Hangsleben
429 Williams Boulevard
Springfield, Illinois

My dear Mrs. Hangsleben:

I was very glad indeed to receive your letter and especially to note the statement with reference to the burial place of David Elkin.

There is still a very consistent effort on the part of people living near Mitchell, Indiana to connect this David Elkins who was a soldier in the war of 1812 with the David E. Elkin who was minister of the Little Mount church in Kentucky and who finally was called to the grave of Nancy Hanks to preach her funeral.

If you can find anything further at all that would help to refute the Mitchell tradition, I should like very much to have it.

The last I heard of Fields Elkin, whom I mention in my book, he was living in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. Whether he is still alive, I do not know.

Enclosed you will please find a photostat of a bulletin which I published two or three years ago on David Elkin which I thought you might like to have.

Very sincerely yours,

Director
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation

LAW:LH
Enc.

Lincolnia

REV. MURR'S ADDRESS AT GRAVE OF REV. ELKINS

The following story, taken from The Christian Advocate, was written by the Rev. J. Ed. Murr, a former pastor of the Methodist Church at this place and now pastor of the First M. E. Church at Washington, Ind. It is very interesting and indicates the amount of study made in recent years by Rev. Murr on the Lincoln history. An editor's note in the publication states "Mr. Murr has gathered extensive and valuable material about Abraham Lincoln and his early residence in Indiana. He was consulted by the late Albert J. Beveridge in the preparation of his life of Lincoln. He spent his early life and one of his first pastorates in the 'Lincoln country' of southwestern Indiana. He personally talked with eleven persons who had known Thomas and Nancy Hanks Lincoln and their son, Abraham. The Lincoln material which Rev. Murr possesses constitutes a fund of information which deserves publication in some permanent form."

The story by Rev. Murr follows:

"One of the imperishable incidents in the life of Abraham Lincoln was the writing of a letter by his own hand when he was nine years old, asking a minister to come and preach the funeral service for his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln. Ministers were scarce and often far away. Funeral services could not be held at the time of burial. Frequently they were months after death, or at a time when the minister could come. So it was with the funeral services of Abraham Lincoln's mother. She died on October 5, 1818. Her funeral sermon was delivered over her grave many months afterward in what is now known as the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial Park, near Gentryville, Ind.

"The minister who came in answer to the letter was David Elkin or Elkins, who lived at Hodgenville, Ky. He knew the Lincolns before they migrated to Indiana. He is said to have been a Hard Shell Baptist preacher, but there is creditable evidence that he was a Methodist, or at least married a Methodist girl. He named his oldest son Wesley. In four generations of the Elkins family, the name Wesley appears as many times, and once it was John Wesley. There is a John Wesley now in the family. He was a member of the same horde of representatives in Indiana twenty-seven years ago. His name is John Wesley Weaver. His mother was an Elkins.

"In his youth he was so wild that he was called 'Devil Dave,' and his chief occupation was that of a fiddler at dances. Converted at the age of twenty-two under remarkable circumstances he became a minister. He was forty years of age when he preached the funeral sermon for Lincoln's mother. He was a large man, weighing over 200 pounds, red haired, and wearing a long beard. He rode a sorrel horse, smoked a pipe. On the funeral trip he became interested in Indiana and bought a farm in Spice Valley, southwest of Bedford and near Bryantsville, Ind. The region was densely wooded. He resided in this valley for fifty years, but traveled much on preaching tours. He died at Thanksgiving time, 1868, and was buried on a wooded hilltop not far from the village of Bryantsville. The place is known as the Connelly Burial Ground. It is a tiny cemetery, and occupies a small clearing surrounded by second-growth timber.

"The grave of David Elkins was marked some years ago by a government marker, secured by Harrison Blackwell and Mr. Burton, both Union soldiers. The marker bears this inscription, 'David Elkins, 2 S C Militia, 1812.'

"During this last summer, Messrs. John A. Rowe and Charles Lanz, of Bedford, had the plot about the grave cleared and a Bedford stone monument was erected (Mr. Rowe furnished the stone and Mr. Lanz put up the iron fence) bearing this inscription:

"'DAVID ELKINS

"'Pioneer preacher of the wilderness. He preached the funeral sermon for Nancy Hanks Lincoln at the request of her nine-year-old son, Abraham Lincoln. Dedicated September 21, 1935, by the Indiana Methodist Conference.'

"The feature of the program of the last session of the Indiana Conference was the dedication of this memorial to David Elkins on Saturday afternoon, September 21. The memorial address was given by the writer in the First Church, Bedford, at 2:00 o'clock. The dedication services of the memorial stone were held at 4:00 o'clock at the grave. They were attended by over one hundred persons, including many ministers and others. Three great-grandchildren of David Elkins were present. The program was arranged by Rev. George S. Henninger, pastor of the First Church, Bedford, and the pastor-host of the conference. The assembled group repeated the Lord's Prayer. The writer made a few remarks.

"Some writers have denied that the David Elkins, buried in this rural cemetry, was the man who preached the funeral sermon for Nancy Hanks Lincoln. I have affidavits to support my affirmation that the names David Elkin and David Elkins applied to the same man, and that the memorial stone rises above the grave of the man who in tenderness of heart made his way to the lonely grave and preached the sermon where Lincoln's mother is buried. I have talked also with one or more persons who remember that in his lifetime David Elkins avowed that he preached the funeral sermon. One man now living who heard Elkins preach and heard him say he preached the funeral sermon.

"Nancy Hanks Lincoln was a tall woman with broad and high forehead, deep-set, blue-gray eyes, an intellectual but not beautiful face. Her nose and mouth in form were transmitted to her. A pronounced melancholy marked her temperament, but it was thin veneer compared to her humor. From his mother Abraham inherited kindness, religious feeling, and good humor. From his father he received caution, common sense, and his coarse, black hair. Nancy Hanks was born in Virginia, at Mill Creek, 1784. Her mother was Lucy Hanks. Her father is unknown. She married Thomas Lincoln, hom she met by accident on June 12, 1806.

"In October, 1818, a neighbor, Mrs. Brooner, was stricken by milk sickness, a mysterious malady of pioneer days. It was marked by great nausea; the skin turned dark, even black; food was refused, and death came rapidly. Some thought the disease was caused by drinking milk from cows which had fed upon snake root. It may have been a form of pernicious malaria. Mrs. Brooner died of the disease on October, 4, and Mrs. Lincoln died on October 5. Thomas Lincoln and John Hanks made the coffin from cast-off logs in the half-faced camp. Abraham whittled the pins which held the rude box together. The body was placed upon a sled and drawn by oxen to the grave, about one-half mile south of the cabin home. I knew Mrs. Brooner's son, Allen, a preacher, the only man living who knew where to point out Mrs. Lincoln's grave in y879, when Mr. C. E. Studebeker, of South Bend, Ind., erected the memorial which tens of thousands of persons have visited. Contrary to the inscription on the memorial, the funeral sermon was delivered in the early summer, and not in March. It was warm weather when the funeral was preached. It had to be. The people sat about on the ground or stood around the grave. It was very late spring or early summer."

Note.—We are indebted to Mrs. Margaret Jean, Librarian at Petersburg, Ind., for copy of the above interesting article.—Editor.

Bedford, Indiana.
Breckenridge Road
June 8, 1938.

Mr. Orrin V. Brown, President
Lincoln Truth Committee
Dale, Indiana.

Dear Mr. Brown:

Reading the enclosed clipping regarding the formation of the Lincoln Truth Committee, I am hopeful that you may be able to be of some help to us here in Lawrence county.

We have alwys believed that David Elkins, an itinerant Methodist circuit rider, who tradition says, came to Indiana, from Kentucky months after the death of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, at the request of her young son, Abraham, to preach a belated funeral sermon, lies buried in the old Conley burial ground, near Bryantsville in Lawrence county. We have affidavits from some fifteen people that Elkins is buried there and that he is the man who preached the funeral sermon, including one made by an old man who knew David Elkins personally and made affidavit that he knew he was buried in the Conley cemetery and that he had personally heard Elkins relate, many times, the circumstances of the Nancy Hanks Lincoln funeral. ~~###~~ The Indiana Methodist Conference has also recognized the grave as being that of the man who preached Lincoln's mother's funeral, but yet, in spite of this and of out affidavits, there are those who contend that the man Elkins, who preached the funeral, is buried in Kentucky and not in Indiana.

If you have any information of any sort, touching on this incident in the life of Lincoln, will you send it to me at once, in order that I will get it not later than Monday, June 13. I am going to Vincennes, Tuesday, June 14, to attend the Memorial dedication and wish to take all possible proof that the man buried near Bryantsville is the man who preached the funeral sermon over Nancy Hanks Lincoln's grave that I can amass and present it to Dr. Warren who seems to be ~~###~~ our chief antagonist. The main reason we are so much interested in this matter is that we ordered markers for this grave and the State Historical Commission refuses to okay our order on account of the doubt raised by Dr. Warren.

Very truly yours
E. C. Turner
E.C.Turner, Staff Writer
Federal Writers' Projects.

et

Answered June 10 1938

(copy)

WARREN'S ARGUMENT.

DAVID ELKINS

The tradition which holds that David Elkin preached the funeral services of Nancy Hanks Lincoln is probably true. The writer will present for the first time the story of the visit as it has come down to Fields Elkin through his father. He said, "Grandfather Elkin went to visit his two sons who had moved to Indiana, and while on his way he stopped at Thomas Lincoln's, whom he had known when Thomas lived in Kentucky, and while there preached the funeral services of Nancy Hanks Lincoln. He then went on to visit his sons."

The citizens of Mitchell, Indiana, have a movement (1926)to erect a monument to this same David Elkin, who they claim is buried in an abandoned cemetery, three miles from there. A marker bearing the inscription, "David Elkins, 2 S.C. Militia, War 1812" marks the spot where this David Elkins is buried. This cannot be the same David Elkin. He did not spell his name with the final "s" and he was not in the War of 1812. The grandson of the old preacher told me that his grandfather died in the vicinity of Mt. Sherman, near the Greene-Larue county line, Ky., and was buried there. David Elkin, Jr., son of the preacher, died in 1902 at Mt. Sherman, and is buried in the old Moriah Cemetery. My opinion is that David Elkin, the preacher who is associated with the Lincolns, lies buried in the same cemetery. (Warren's Lincoln Parentage and Childhood, page 246, 247 and 248.)

The tradition of the Elkin family is that the good parson, David Elkin, did preach the funeral services of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, when on a visit to his two sons in Indiana. (Vannest's Lincoln the Hoosier, page 24.) Beveridge mentions him only as Parson Elkin of Kentucky. (Palmer)

Mr. L.A.Warren says that David Elkin, who preached the funeral services of Nancy Hanks Lincoln was not in the War of 1812 and is found in Kentucky before 1800. He is buried at the Benningfield Chapel ~~#####~~ Cemetery on the Greene-Larue county boundary line, in Kentucky. Mr. Warren has affidavit from the grandson, Fields Elkin, Elizabethtown, Ky., that his grandfather preached the funeral services of Nancy Hanks Lincoln. (Note penciled in, page 368, Ind. Mag. Hist., Vol. 11)

Clk. _____ Dale, Ind., June 11 1938

M Joe Mike

No.

Dawson Springs
Box 126
(Near Cooling Tower)
Ky.
Hopkins Co

Can for
L.P.
Dawson
and Dr Moore

27

BROWN BROS. LUMBER CO.
PHONE 58

Clk. _____ Dale, Ind., _____ 193__

M Location of Grave

No. of David Elkins
Circuit Rider that
Mitchell
Isaac Elkins
Mary Elkins
Jemerd.

W

Graveyard

Information from
Pasadena California
Jos E Wiles
29 S. Dayton
Springs

5

Bedford, Indiana
Breckenridge Road, R. 4
June 15, 1938.

Dr. Louis A. Warren, Director
The Lincoln National Life Foundation
Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

My Dear Dr. Warren:

I am very sorry that I arrived in Vincennes Tuesday too late to attend the dedication of the Lincoln Migration Shrine and to present affidavits in my possession that tend to show that Rev. David Elkins, the man who preached the funeral service over the grave of Lincoln's mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, months after her death, is buried in the old Conley burial ground, a mile and a half southeast of Bryantsville. I was very anxious to present these affidavits for your inspection as we understand from Dr. Coleman that it is largely through a doubt raised by you as to whether the Lawrence county David Elkins is the man who preached the belated funeral sermon, that final approval on a set of markers for this burial ground and grave, ordered from the Historical Markers Project have been withheld.

I am enclosing copies of letters written several years ago by E. Y. Guernsey to Dr. John A. Gibbons, together with copies of affidavits secured by Dr. Gibbons from people residing in the Bryantsville neighborhood. I would respectfully call your attention to the second sentence in Mr. Guernsey's letter to Dr. Gibbons, dated at Indianapolis, September 7, 1929 and particularly to the affidavit executed by Harrison Blackwell, a man 89 years old who affirmed that he knew Elkins personally, had heard him tell of conducting the funeral service and that he knew him to be buried in the Conley burial ground, and the one by Anna Flick, daughter-in-law of Mrs. Frances Elkins Flick who was a daughter of David Elkins, the preacher, and who had heard her mother-in-law relate the story of how her father preached the funeral of Lincoln's mother, many times. To me and to the members of the Lawrence County Historical Society, which organization sponsored the erection of the markers, these affidavits seem to be conclusive evidence that the Lawrence county David Elkins is the man who conducted the funeral services.

Recently I wrote to Elizabethtown, Ky., in an effort to contact the Field Elkin you mention but my letter was returned with a penciled notation that no such person was known in Elizabethtown.

Please return the affidavits.

Very truly yours
E. C. Turner
E. C. Turner
Federal Writers Projects.

June 23, 1938

Mr. E. C. Turner
Federal Writers Projects
Bedford, Indiana

My dear Mr. Turner:

Most certainly I would not want to stand in the way of any effort being made in Lawrence County to memorialize the preacher by the name of David Elkins associated with Nancy Hanks Lincoln.

If you will turn to the Indiana Magazine of History for June 1926 and refer to page 203 you will see the argument which I put forth there which proves conclusively that the David Elkins who saw service in the war of 1812 from South Carolina could not have been the David Elkins who lived in Kentucky and preached for the Little Mound church and to whom Abraham Lincoln wrote the letter asking him to preach his mother's funeral.

I did some very conscientious research work in Lawrence County, Indiana in an attempt to find some evidence of David Elkins' residence there as I am just as anxious to learn the truth about this as anyone I wish that it might be proved to be the grave of the minister who preached the Nancy Hanks funeral.

The only Elkins records which I could find in Lawrence County was the name of Isaac H. Elkin who performed the marriage ceremony in that county on June 5, 1843. He also spelled his name Elkin.

I also took occasion to carefully trace through the 1820 and 1830 census of Lawrence County in the State Library all names therein but failed to find the name of David Elkins.

As far as I know there does not appear to be in print anywhere the name of David Elkins on a contemporary document in Lawrence County.

On June 21, 1922 I had an interview in Elizabethtown, Kentucky with Fields Elkin a grandson of Rev. David Elkin. You will please find enclosed a copy of the interview also a picture of Fields Elkin taken at that time although I presume now he may have passed away.

Commissioner's book of Green County for 1842 shows David Elkin, Sr., listing 1 horse, 2 cattle and 200 acres of ground on Little Barren river in Green County. The same list shows David Elkin, Jr., father of Fields Elkin listed as a 21 years old or older. This confirms the fact that David Elkin, Sr. lived in Green County, Kentucky in 1842.

I had heard that some effort was being made to memorialize this spot in Lawrence County but inasmuch as what I had discovered did not seem to be in harmony with the general opinion of the people living close to there I did not care to force myself into the picture with the evidence which had already been presented in the Indiana Magazine of History.

It would be a pleasure indeed if these records could be harmonized and I will be glad to do anything that you may suggest that will help to bring about the documentary support of the claim.

This fact is true, however, that the original monument standing over Elkin's grave in Lawrence county with the inscription it bears cannot possibly have been erected, the monument which now stands there is a tribute to the Elkin who buried Nancy Hanks. This same David Elkin could not have been in South Carolina and Kentucky at the same time. He could not have been fighting in the war of 1812 and serving as a clergyman in Kentucky during all those months in which the conflict was being waged.

I have gone into length in this discussion because I do not wish to be misunderstood as to having based my arguments prepared so many years ago for the Historical Magazine on traditional statements but on the authorized court records of Kentucky.

Very truly yours,

LAW:PW
L.A.Warren

Director

Bedford, Indiana
Breckenridge Road, R 4
June 22, 1938.

Mr. O.V.Brown
Dale, Indiana.

Dear Mr. Brown:

Sorry that I failed to see you at Vincennes, last Tuesday. I did not arrive until noon and by that time the dedication was practically over so I did not get to see anyone, not even Dr. Barren.

I am enclosing copies of the affidavits that we have secured, in support of our contention that David Elkins is the man who preached the funeral of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, the mother of the President, Abraham Lincoln, and that he is buried in the Conley Cemetery, near Bryantsville. I want you to look them over carefully and let me know what you think of them.

You need not bother about sending these copies back unless you wish as I have retained copies of them for my files.

Thanking you for any aid you may give us in establishing the fact that the man who preached the belated funeral sermon over the grave of Lincoln's mother lies buried in Lawrence County soil, I am

Very truly yours

E. C. Turner

et

E.C.Turner, Staff Writer
Federal Writers' Project.

The Elkins grave near Mitchell.

Kentucky, Indiana Both Claim Grave of Lincoln's Friend

Parson Came to Little Pigeon Creek To Preach Over Grave of Dead Mother

Courier Journal 2/12/39

By "PERC" TURNER.

Bedford, Ind., Feb. 11. — Sprawled upon the floor in front of a huge, open fireplace, in one of the pioneer log cabins of the Little Pigeon Creek settlement in Southern Indiana, lay a lonely, 9-year-old boy. It was the late fall, in 1818, and just a few hours before he had followed behind a rough, wooden coffin to the graveyard, where he had seen his mother buried. No funeral service was read—there being no minister to be had in those days. Now, with eyes blinded by tears, he spelled out a childish appeal to an old friend of the family in Kentucky, a Methodist circuit rider.

The lad was Abraham Lincoln and the note was to Parson David Elkin, or Elkins, who had been a close friend of the Lincoln family before Thomas Lincoln loaded his wife and children into a covered wagon and came to Little Pigeon Creek, in Spencer County. The wife, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, had just died and young Abe, determined that the mother whom he had adored should have a sermon over her grave, even though belated, was scrawling a note to his old friend, begging him to come to Little Pigeon Creek and preach it.

Came and Preached.

The letter was entrusted to the first Kentucky-bound traveler to pass through the settlement, and eventually it came into the hands of the Parson Elkin—and several months young Abe and the neighboring settlers listened, as the parson paid tribute to the woman whose body had been con-

ducted the funeral sermon of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of the President, Abraham Lincoln."

Other Affidavits Given.

Other affidavits by Douglas L. Burton, Richard D. Burton, Theodore Greer, Grant Erwin, Henry Burton and Thomas Tirey, testified of having heard parents or grandparents speak of having known Parson Elkins and of having heard him relate the circumstances of the Lincoln funeral service. Each affirmed that the Parson Elkins of their parents' association was, to their certain knowledge, buried in the old Conley burying ground.

One of these, Richard D. Burton, relates the story of the burial of Parson Elkins in the Conley burying ground as he heard it from his grandmother, Catherine Burton.

And so the matter rests officially. Neither State has taken steps to recognize the burial place of the man so closely associated with the Great Emancipator, although repeated efforts have been made in Indiana to have the grave near Mitchell so recognized. But one thing has been accomplished, that is the official recognition of the grave in the Conley cemetery, near Mitchell, Ind., by the Indiana Methodist Conference, which, during its conference, held in Bedford in 1935, went on record as recognizing the Indiana grave as the grave of him who preached Lincoln's mother's funeral. The conference unveiled a monument in his honor.

While the Nation as a whole celebrates the birth of the Great Emancipator, one hundred and thirty years ago, two States, Indiana and Kentucky claim the burial place of that same David Elkins, or Elkin, the man who heeded the request of the broken-hearted lad and braved the perils of a long journey into the Indiana wilderness to preach a belated funeral service. Indiana claims he is buried in an old deserted graveyard, known as the "Conley burying ground," about five miles northwest of Mitchell, while Kentucky claims that he is buried in the old Moriah cemetery, in the vicinity of Mt. Sherman, near the Green-Larue County line.

The question of where the parson was buried arose some ten years ago when the citizens of Lawrence County launched a movement to have the Elkins grave in the old Conley burial ground officially recognized as the grave of Lincoln's friend.

Claim Is Disputed.

Among the first to dispute the Lawrence County claim was Dr. Louis A. Warren of Fort Wayne, a well-known Lincoln historian, who argued that the man was Parson David Elkin, not Elkins. In proof of his claim Dr. Warren produced evidence in the person of one Fields Elkin, at that time of Elizabethtown, Ky., who made an affidavit that he had heard his grandfather, David Elkin, tell of preaching Lincoln's mother's funeral. He testified that he believed his grandfather to be buried in the old Moriah cemetery.

To refute the claim of Fields Elkin the citizens of Lawrence County gathered eight affidavits each attesting that the David Elkins who is buried near Mitchell was in reality the preacher in question. Some of these affidavits were made by men who had heard their parents and grandparents speak of their associations with Parson Elkins, who at one time was the regular pastor of the old Spice Valley church; one was by an octogenarian who had been a member of his Spice Valley congregation and who had known him personally, and another was by the wife of one of the good parson's grandsons.

Knew Parson Personally.

Harrison Blackwell, 89 years old at the time he made his affidavit, testified that he had known Parson Elkins personally. He stated in his affidavit "that he has heard the said David Elkins make the statement that he knew Abraham Lincoln, and that he conducted the funeral service of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, the mother of the President, Abraham Lincoln, and that he knew David Elkins to be buried in the Conley cemetery of Lawrence County, Indiana."

Mrs. Anna Flick, a daughter-in-law of Mrs. Frances Elkins, who was the daughter of Parson Elkins, made an affidavit stating that "she is the daughter-in-law of Mrs. Frances Elkins Flick, and that Mrs. Frances Elkins Flick is the daughter of the Rev. David Elkins and that she has heard her mother-in-law, Mrs. Frances Elkins Flick, state on numerous

Springfield, Ill., Jan. 15, 1946

Mr. Louis A. Warren,
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Mr. Warren

A few years ago I wrote you telling you that my maternal grandfather was the son of David Elkin, who was associated with the early life of the Lincoln family.

In reply you sent me a photastat of a bulletin on David Elkin. I prize this very highly. You asked me at that time for further information about Parson Elkin, especially anything that might refute the Mitchell, Ind., tradition that David Elkin of the Lincoln tradition was buried there.

I am sorry that I have never been able to find anything authentic concerning this, my mother, the only one left of her immediate family, still maintains her belief that her grandfather was buried in Kentucky and that her grandmother, David Elkin's wife then came from Kentucky to Illinois to make her home ## with them.

About a year ago I met a cousin, Fred Elkin Of Indianapolis, Ind., who was about the age of my mother, he was the son of my mother's oldest brother, Isaac Hodgen Elkin the second. This cousin told me a tale of our great grandfather moving to Lawrence county, Indiana from Kentucky and living on a farm four miles north of Mitchell, Ind. He claims that an aunt had sent to their family a trunk belonging to David Elkin and that he had seen receipts made out to David Elkin from people around Bedford, Ind., he claims our great grandfather preached in the Rock Creek Baptist-Methodist church near Finger cemetery. He said that many years ago he was in the vicinity of Bedford and there met old people who remembered Parson Elkin as a man of good character and strong individuality a little bit radical on some things but always sincere in his beliefs.

This cousin, who passed away quite suddenly last fall, also told me that he began using the final "s" in spelling his name after giving up in dispair of having people call him Elkin instead of Elkins.

Recently I came into possession of a book, The Martyr Presidents, by William M. Thayer, 1882. Chapter 6 on Lincoln contains the story of Parson Elkin arriving at the Lincoln home in Indiana after his horseback ride from Kentucky. It says:"But one day, when the lad (young Abe) was about two miles from home, who should he see coming but Parson Elkins, on his old bay horse!"

This brings to my mind stories grandfather Elkin used to tell us children of his father setting out on his old bay horse, Dan, with his saddle bags filled with parched corn to supsist on during the long journey through an almost unbroken wilderness from their home in Ky., to Ind to preach Abe's mother's funeral, at the behest of the boy who had written his first letter to their old neighbor and friend and had sent it by a traveler going into Kentucky.

Parson Elkin's wife objected to him making the long hazardous trip, no doubt that a big part of her objection was due to the fact that she would be left along for a long period of time with three little ones and another expected soon to make its appearance.

Springfield, Ill., Jan. 15, 1942

Mr. Robert E. Sherwood,
Illinois Division, Western Education,
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mr. Sherwood

[illegible] letter telling you about my
[illegible] in the Lincoln Society.

[illegible] you want to [illegible] it publication on
[illegible] Trade. [illegible] this very nicely. [illegible]
[illegible] Lincoln Society [illegible] Lincoln, especially [illegible]
[illegible] faults the [illegible], and [illegible] the [illegible]
[illegible] in [illegible] [illegible].

I am sorry that [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] anything [illegible] my [illegible], [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible], still [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

About a [illegible] [illegible] a [illegible], [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible], [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible]

But the Parson, a very determined man on matters pertaining to his duties made ready for the trip and in due time set fourth. It was many months before the family again saw the husband and father, and by that time my grandfather, Isaac Hodgen Elkin, who was born in the early part of 1820, had arrived safely in the Parson's log cabin and was on hand to greet the wanderer.

Grandfather Elkin used also to tell us stories about his father's religious and political activities and arguments. It seems that he attended every religious or political meeting held in horseback riding distance of his home. He had decided views and never hesitated to speak him mind. He was a strong Republican, as the party who elected Thomas Jefferson, was known at that time, and had many acrid arguments with Federalists he encountered.

Mr. Warren I am enclosing $5.00 and if it is possible will you secure your book, Lincoln's Parentage and Childhood and inscribe it and send it to me. I have never owned this book but until a few years ago I had one belonging to my brother-in-law in my possession.

With very best wished for the New Year I am,

Sincerely Elsie Sutton Hangsleben

returned

5.00

Mrs. O.M. Hangsleben
837 S. Lincoln Ave.,
Springfield, Ill.

Elkin family in Ind

March 29, 1946

Mrs. O.M. Hangsleben
837 South Lincoln Avenue
Springfield, Illinois

Dear Mrs. Hangsleben:

I fear you will think I am very lax in my correspondence by not having before answered your letter of January 15. The fact is I have been out of the office nearly two months and as yet I have not ceaught up with the correspondence which assumulated while I was gone. Your letter is one that I have not had time to answer until just now.

My secretary tells me that she returned the $5.00 which you sent for one of my books. They originally sold for $3.60 but they are now out of print and you will have to buy one second-handed. I think possibly you may be able to pick up one in Springfield for $2.00 or $3.00.

What you tell me about Elkin'sburial in Indiana is of very great interest because I have always held he was buried in Kentucky and I shall make further investigation with respect to the grave near Mitchell, Indiana, and if I find further information about the family I will be happy to write you.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB

Director

March 20, 1[illegible]

Mr. D.M. Tanquinian
[illegible] 3 [illegible] Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Tanquinian:

I regret very much that I do not have [illegible] to
correspondence in our service which accompanied your letter
of February 1[illegible]. The fact is I have been out of the office
quite a few weeks and as yet I have not caught up with
the correspondence which accumulated while I was gone.
This letter, in fact, is the first I have had time to answer out
just now.

My secretary tells me that you requested the
[illegible] you sent for one of my books. Then certainly
will be [illegible] but I am not sure if I have any yet
with me to say the exact number. I think some [illegible]
may be able to pick up [illegible] in Philadelphia [illegible]

When you talk of what it [illegible] in Indiana
is of very great interest [illegible] I have always [illegible]
having in Kentucky and I [illegible] some [illegible]
with [illegible] to the [illegible] Indiana, and if I
[illegible] [illegible] with [illegible] I will be [illegible]
[illegible] you.

Very [illegible],

[illegible]

FAV:MM

Punches

87-Year-Old Gunsmith's Sights Still True, Even by Kerosene

Special to The News

BEDFORD, Ind., Feb. 13 — Uncle Tom Tirey, 87-year-old gunsmith and watchmaker, has been repairing guns and watches for the last 70 years.

He still works by a kerosene lamp in his home in Bryantsville, southwest of Bedford.

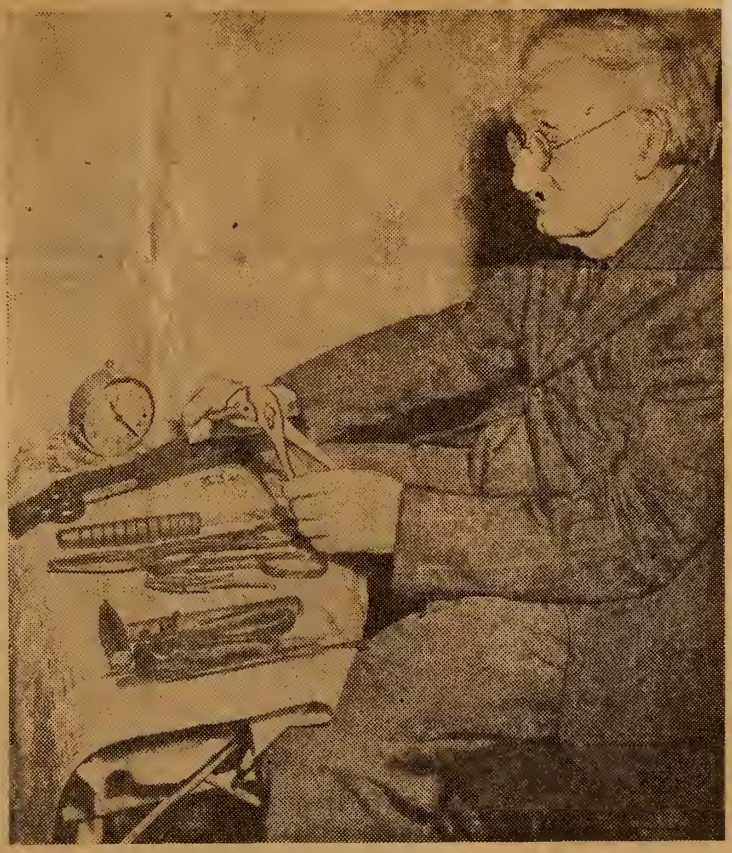
Thomas A. Tirey's knowledge of guns dates back to the muzzle loader, and he is mighty handy with modern makes. Since World War II he has been repairing foreign guns brought home as war souvenirs.

Uncle Tom is still considered a better than average shot with a revolver, rifle and shotgun.

"Kids years ago had guns, mostly .22-caliber rifles. They sold for around $1.25," Tirey recalls.

"It's possible that I worked on guns owned by Sam Bass, who was accused of several holdups in the West. I knew Bass, for he was born in this community," the gunsmith said.

The elderly man and his wife live in the neighborhood where David Elkins, minister who officiated at the funeral of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of Abraham Lincoln, was born and reared.



THOMAS A. TIREY

THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS

Monday, February 13, 1950

W. E. CLARK, President
D. W. McNABB, Vice-Pres.

THE BEDFORD NATIONAL BANK
BEDFORD, INDIANA

R. C. SOWDER, Cashier
D. L. VAUGHT, Asst. Cashier

December 5, 1952

Louis A. Warren, Director
Lincoln National Life Foundation
Ft. Wayne, Indiana

My dear Dr. Warren:

Thank you so much for your kind letter of December 4 enclosing information in connection with David Elkins. Since your visit to Bedford I have made numerous inquiries in connection with this man's life in Lawrence County one hundred years ago. I see that he performed a number of marriage ceremonies from 1847 to as late as 1856, and in all cases the name was spelled Elkins instead of Elkin. In one instance the certificate of marriage was signed by mark. I am making plans to visit the Spice Valley Church to contact the Secretary and see if they have available any old church records which would more nearly tie up the identity of this man.

I am a bit embarrassed, Dr. Warren, that I did not tender you a check for the splendid address you made before our club two weeks ago yesterday. I am taking the liberty of forwarding to you our check in the sum of $15. which we are paying to you personally for your splendid tribute to Abraham Lincoln.

With kindest regards to both Mrs. Warren and yourself.

Most sincerely yours,

D. W. McNabb

D. W. McNabb
Vice-President

MLG

Enclosure

December 11, 1952

Mr. D. W. McNabb
Vice President
The Bedford National Bank
Bedford, Indiana

My dear Mr. McNabb:

It was very kind of you indeed to forward a check in payment for my services rendered at Bedford and of course I thought Mr. Gibson had told you that there would be no charge whatever as I am not allowed to take any fees for any of the speaking engagements so I feel I must return your check which you so graciously forwarded.

I am happy you are going to follow through on the Elkins story and I do hope you will find some positive evidence that he lies buried in your county and that the grave now marked is the identical spot containing his remains. I will be very much interested to hear the progress which you will be able to make.

Very truly yours,

Director

LAW:jaf
Dr.Louis A. Warren